

# **Cuneiform tablet collection**

## **L632**

---

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

October 30, 2017

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts  
140 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204  
317-232-3671

## Table of Contents

---

<u>Summary Information</u> .....	3
<u>Historical Note</u> .....	4
<u>Scope and Contents</u> .....	4
<u>Administrative Information</u> .....	4
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u> .....	5

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository</b>	Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Title</b>	Cuneiform tablet collection
<b>Date</b>	circa 2350-2000 bc
<b>Extent</b>	1.0 Cubic feet 1 cubic foot box
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Box]</b>	1

### Preferred Citation

Cuneiform tablet collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

## Historical Note

---

Cuneiform script is one of the earliest known systems of writing. Developed in Mesopotamia around 3500-3000 bc, a stylus or scribe is pressed into soft clay to produce wedge impressions, called pictographs or phonograms.

---

## Scope and Contents

---

The collection includes simplified, wedge-based strokes with word concepts, rather than signs. They were found in southern Mesopotamia (modern day southern Iraq) and created by the ancient civilization of Sumer.

Collection consists of 6 cuneiform tablets. Tablet 1 is a temple record of offerings found at Jokha dated to around 2350 bc. Tablet 2 contains a long list of produce, probably used for tax purposes and comes from Jokha from about 2350 to 2100 bc. Tablet 3 is a simple business document from Senkereh, about 2200 bc. Tablet 4 is a butcher's bill found at Drehem, dated about 2350 bc. Tablet 5 is a votive cone, made by priests at the temple of Ishtar and sold to visiting pilgrims. It served as a prayer for the king and bears an inscription which reads, "For Sin-ga-shid, the mighty hero, King of Erech, King of Amanu, in the temple of the Goddess Ishtar which he built in the royal residence of his kingdom." The tablet was found at Warka and dates to about 2100 bc. Tablet 6 is a school-boy writing exercise tablet. It was found at Warka and dates to 2000 bc.

For more information, visit the Indiana State Library's blog post, titled "Cuneiform Tablets": <http://blog.library.in.gov/cuneiform-tablets/>

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

## Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a purchase from Edgar J. Banks, antiquarian and archaeologist, on 1927/04/25.

## Accruals

No further additions are expected.

## Processing Information

Collection processing and EAD finding aid completed 2017/10/30 by Bethany Fiechter.

---

## Controlled Access Headings

---

### Geographic Name(s)

- Iraq
- Mesopotamia

### Personal Name(s)

- Ishtar (Assyro-Babylonian deity)

### Subject(s)

- Cuneiform tablet
- Cuneiform writing
- Drehem (Extinct city)--History--Sources
- Erech (Extinct city)--History--Sources
- Larsa (Extinct city)--History--Sources

- Sumerian language--Texts
- Umma (Extinct city)--History--Sources